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FETICHISM IN THE CAMPAIGN.

THE alleged election of Grover Cleveland to the Presidency in 1884 was the most astounding phenomenon in American politics, and it is doubtful whether its parallel can be found in the history of any nation. Obscure men, ignorant men, degraded men, have been elevated to power, but it has never before occurred that a man possessing every acknowledged disqualification has been selected because of them, and elevated from the lowest to the highest estate without ever having expressed a recorded opinion upon any public question. It is not known that he ever made a political speech, tried an important cause, was a member of any legislative body, wrote a remembered paragraph, or expressed an intelligent idea, and after three years of administration his political views, if he has any, are a matter of surmise even to his partisans. It remains uncertain to this hour whether his predilections in the war for the Union were with the North or the South, and except that he furnished a substitute when conscripted, whom he subsequently permitted to die in the poor-house, it is certain that he sustained no personal relation, either in sentiment or deed, to the most momentous controversy of modern times. He has no perceptible connection with the category of accidents to which his elevation is due. He had neither personal following, popularity, admiration nor respect, because he had exhibited none of the traits nor attainments that inspire regard. He was not eloquent, nor learned, nor cultivated, nor agreeable, nor entertaining, nor attractive in mind, manner or person. His enjoyments were those which are found in the unrestrained indulgence of the appetites and passions, and his chosen associates were the companions of his orgies.

From this inert and vacant mass the transcendentalists and Pharisees of our politics have made unto themselves a graven image, to which they bow down and worship with ignominious idol-

atry and self abasement. They declare that he possesses the courage of Jackson, though the first threat of public exasperation, like that aroused by the battle-flag order, drives him to retraction, and to the imputation of unpopular acts to the indiscretion of subordinates. His tedious platitudes are described as wisdom, and his dull self-complacency as imperturbable poise and resolution. His wearisome protestations of purity, and of antagonism to the corrupt and malignant influences of his party associates, are announced as evidences of official integrity, which justify his assumptions of superior honesty, and warrant him in perpetually impugning the motives of mankind. He regards as enemies all who are unable to concur with his swollen estimate of his superlative preëminence, and manifests resentment toward all opponents, whether in his own party or elsewhere. Having cheated the "Reformers" and bullied the renegades in the North, he truckles to his masters in the South, acknowledges his hypocrisy, admits his treachery, and, not disconcerted by exposure, demands another term in the face of his plain avowal that he would not ask for a renomination. Devoid alike of imagination and of conscience, he appeals neither to the sentiment nor to the moral sense of the people. Attention will not be diverted, therefore, from the real issues of the campaign by considerations personal to Cleveland. He will be nominated, not as a leader but as a fetich—a thing endowed by superstition and ignorance with fictitious attributes. There will be no hero-worship. It is impossible to excite popular enthusiasm for an executive who confessedly reaches the climax of his great powers in refusing to approve an appropriation for a public building in a country town, and vetoing with ghoulish glee a two-dollar pension bill for a mutilated and disabled Union veteran.

Paradoxical as it may appear, the administration of Cleveland has resulted in inestimable advantage to the people of the United States. It has furnished additional evidence, if such were necessary, of their capacity for self-government. There is no longer occasion to despair of the perpetuity of the Republic.

Politically, it has established beyond controversy, as one of the issues of the campaign, the falsity of the accusations upon which the Republican party was defeated in 1884. So constant had been the assertions of Democratic orators for a generation that Republican administration had been extravagant and dishon-

est, and its civil service corrupt, that many good men felt an uneasy suspicion that the ledgers had been tampered with, and unworthy favorites retained in office to conceal guilty secrets from the public. The fulfillment of the promise to "open the books" and "turn the rascals out" was anticipated with exultation by some and with anxiety by many; but the result has disappointed both. Under the hostile scrutiny of three years no Republican official has been removed for cause, neither error nor defalcation has been detected in the enormous financial transactions of a quarter of a century, and departure from Republican methods of administration, whenever attempted, has resulted only in loss, confusion, and public disapproval. These charges cannot be repeated. They have been disproved and definitely abandoned.

The Democracy were entrusted with power upon a pledge of economy and reform in the administration of the Government. Reform implies that there is something which needs reformation, and the electors have the right to inquire whether this pledge has been kept or violated. It will be one of the most important issues of the campaign, and the evidence is conclusive and overwhelming that since the days of Jackson there has been no such shameless and dissolute prostitution of the public service to personal and partisan uses as that which has occurred under this new dispensation of purity, sweetness and light, which was supposed to usher in the political millenium. The degradation is complete. Even the pretence of virtue has been dropped, and the unhappy victims of the mock-marriage are treated with unfeeling derision and neglect. Every department of the Government has been transformed into a party machine. Efficient and experienced subordinates have been displaced by incompetent and untrained men for political reasons only, in the mail service, in the Indian Bureau, in the Land Department, till the public business has fallen into imbecile and inextricable disorder. The expenses of the Government, meanwhile, have been greatly increased. An appearance of "economy" has been secured by inadequate appropriations, supplemented by deficiency bills, or by the refusal to pay the acknowledged and ascertained obligations of the Treasury. The Courts of the United States in many districts have been closed, and justice denied for want of funds to pay jurors and witnesses. The spirit, and even the letter of the Civil Service act have been violated to secure partisan results, and the

Commission have amended the statute requiring preference to be given to Union soldiers by adding a provision that they shall not be above forty years of age. As the war closed twenty-three years ago, this regulation renders any soldier ineligible who was more than seventeen years old when it ended. And thus excludes the great mass of veterans for whose benefit the law was enacted.

Upon the questions affecting the revenues and the resources of the nation, an issue of still greater consequence and importance will be presented for the decision of the people in November. The Democratic party distinctly promised to reduce and distribute the surplus in the Treasury ; to readjust the tariff ; to provide against the threatened contraction of the currency through the approaching extinction of the public debt. They have had three years of power, and have not only done nothing, but have proposed nothing. The surplus has reached the highest amount known in our history. The President first exerted an admitted power to use it in the purchase of bonds, and then with suspicious inconsistency refused to exercise it, upon the shallow pretext that his authority was uncertain. He issued an ante-nuptial proclamation to Congress upon silver, which his party in the House of Representatives treated with disdainful indifference. His message upon the tariff was a covert appeal for free trade that was received by every enemy of the United States with unconcealed satisfaction. As a contribution to the literature of the subject, it was respectable only from the antiquity of the débris industriously collected from the rubbish heaps of political economy, and paraded with the conscious pride of the discoverer of a new planet in the realms of space.

One of the most profound and pervading impulses of the American character is an intense pride in citizenship, and in the institutions and the honor of the nation. The democratic party will be called upon to render an account of its stewardship in dealing with foreign powers. It is an unparalleled record of sycophancy and imbecility. No one can read its annals without humiliation, shame and indignation. The fiasco in Mexico, the surrender to England, the disgraceful exhibitions of boorishness and ignorance at other courts, form a chapter of ignominy that fittingly supplements the policy of selecting as diplomatic representatives of the government those who had only signalized themselves by efforts for its destruction.

In the Canadian fisheries dispute the Senate refused to authorize further negotiation ; but in defiance of law, and without warrant under the Constitution, the President appointed Commissioners and consented to an arrangement which is heralded by the other powers as a concession by the United States of all the principal matters in controversy, and which impose conditions upon American citizens to which they cannot submit without degradation and dishonor.

The generation of young men, born since the close of the war, will participate this year for the first time in a presidential election. Their votes will determine the result. To them the war of the Rebellion is as much a matter of history as the war of Independence. They must be instructed, and one of the issues of the campaign will be to teach them which of the two great parties is entitled to their confidence as patriotic citizens. The Democracy have been endeavoring insidiously to obliterate their own record and to reverse the verdict of posterity, by claiming that they supported the Union cause in the supreme crisis of the national life, and are therefore worthy of the suffrages of the youth of the United States. It is an insolently false pretence. The great majority of the Democratic party is composed of the men who attempted to destroy the Union and the Constitution, reinforced, now as then, by a Northern contingent of renegades and apostates who are ready to barter their birthright of manhood and freedom for the pottage of place and power.

But the issue that exceeds all others in importance is suffrage in the South. There are 153 votes in the Electoral College assured to the Democratic party without any other effort than that required to write the certificates of election. Forty-eight more in the North will give Cleveland another term, during which the Supreme Court will be reconstructed upon the basis of hostility to the constitutional amendments and the statutes of freedom. Not only among the white politicians, but among the white voters of the South, there is a settled and avowed determination to eliminate the negro as an element in the political problem, and to suppress his vote. In the language of the Senator from Louisiana, the negroes are to be "persuaded" to abstain from voting ! There is no longer any disguise or concealment of this purpose. They are citizens entitled to vote, and generally Republican in polities, and in several States are the majority ; but

the election machinery being in the hands of the Democracy, they are either excluded from the polls, or their votes are suppressed and destroyed. The election in Louisiana April 17 is an illustration of the methods employed. The State is undoubtedly Republican, and Warmoth was unquestionably the choice of a majority of the electors. The Governor publicly pledged himself to an honest election, admitting that frauds had been committed in the past which should not be repeated. Relying upon these assurances, the Republicans organized, and entered upon the canvass. The Governor, becoming terrified at the prospect of defeat, issued orders to fabricate and manufacture Democratic majorities, and the result was a spurious majority so astounding that the only reply that Senator Eustis could make was, "It is none of your business!" That is to say, by the suppression of majorities, by ballot box stuffing, by forging certificates of election, a President may be chosen, senators and representatives elected, who are to decide every question affecting the tariff, the revenues, the currency, our relations foreign and domestic, the taxes of every citizen, and guide and control the destiny of the nation for the coming century, and it is none of our business! If such methods are to prevail, then constitutional self-government is at an end upon this continent. Dahomey and Zululand are no worse.

The South obtained thirty-eight additional members of Congress by the enfranchisement of the negro. If they wish to deny him the right of suffrage, justice and honor demand that they shall relinquish the increment, so that the equality of suffrage may be restored and the equilibrium between the North and the South maintained.

This then is the paramount issue, surpassing every other ; before which tariffs, taxes, currency and surplus shrink and dwindle into nothingness : impartial justice and the equality of all men before the law.

" Of what avail
Are plough and sail,
Or life, or land, if freedom fail ? "

JOHN J. INGALLS.